



# City of Downey

FUTURE UNLIMITED

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KATHLEEN L. MIDSTOKKE

September 15, 2009

Lester Snow  
Department of Water Resources  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001  
Email: DWR\_IRWM@water.ca.gov

**Subject: Reconsideration of the RAP denial of the LA Gateway IRWM JPA Authority (Gateway Authority)**

Dear Director Snow:

As mayor of The City of Downey, I am surprised and very disappointed that DWR has preliminarily denied the Gateway Authority's status as a Regional Water Management Group (RWMG). As you know, more than 2.1 million Californians live in the 27 cities in the Gateway Region, which overlies the adjudicated Central Groundwater Basin in Southern California. The Gateway Authority not only meets the criteria set forth in the RAP Guidelines, but is already demonstrating the regional planning and project implementation that was the intent of the original IRWM legislation. Because of this, I am requesting that you reconsider and reverse the tentative decision to deny RWMG status to the Gateway Region.

I am very concerned that the decision by DWR does not appear to be based on any regulation or legislation. There appears to be no substantive argument for denying the Gateway Authority's application, as evidenced by the dismissive summary given by DWR staff: *"...the rationale for forming a separate IRWM Region, exclusive of the GLAC IRWM Region, is not compelling. Therefore, DWR does not approve the Gateway Region."* The DWR staff implication here is that there is overlap with the Greater Los Angeles County (GLAC) group. I respectfully assert that this is a serious misunderstanding; the Board of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments, composed of elected officials from all 27 cities in the COG, specifically mandated the formation of the Gateway Authority to address the integrated regional water planning needs of Southeast Los Angeles County. Only the Gateway Authority has the sanction of the 27 Gateway Cities. The City of Downey purposefully and collectively did not sign the current GLAC MOU. None of the cities in this region have consented to regional water management representation by any other agency.

Mr. Lester Snow, Dept. of Water Resources  
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There is a historic and well-documented neglect of the Gateway Region by the larger County planning efforts in a multitude of so called "regional plans," including the historic lack of receiving a fair share of the Gateway Region's transportation funding through the Metropolitan Transportation Authority based on our contribution of funds. Though DWR acknowledges that the Gateway Region will be under represented in the GLAC Region, staff has not proposed a remedy for this entrenched problem of under representation. In fact the approval of the GLAC region by DWR will further exacerbate the funding inequities that have severely impacted our region for decades.

For more than 50 years, the Gateway Cities have proven that they equitably address regional issues ranging from water to transportation to economic development. In addition to satisfying all of the requirements for being a RWMG, the Gateway Authority has a successful track record of effective governance and integrated planning for regional water needs. The Gateway Authority has secured a \$10 million grant to improve water quality in the Los Angeles River and is administering a Metals TMDL monitoring and implementation plan in the San Gabriel River, funded by member agencies. The Gateway Authority brought into the \$10 million Los Angeles River grant project nine cities that were not members of the JPA but needed our help. Because we have not yet gone through the planning effort with respect to adopting a plan, our actions thus far must speak for us, and we think you can agree that the Gateway Authority has demonstrated its ability to cooperate and be inclusive.

To equitably address regional water needs, it is imperative that the Gateway Region maintain strong local leadership in water management issues. On behalf of the City of Downey, I request that you reconsider and reverse the preliminary decision to deny the Gateway Authority's RWMG status, consistent with the intent and purpose of IRWM legislation, and acknowledge the qualifications of the Gateway Authority as a Regional Water Management Group.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dn. Mario A. Guerra".

Dn. Mario A. Guerra  
Mayor

Cc: Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-34<sup>th</sup>)  
Assembly Member Charles Calderon (58<sup>th</sup>)  
Assembly Member Hector De La Torre (50<sup>th</sup>)  
State Senator Alan Lowenthal (27<sup>th</sup>)